

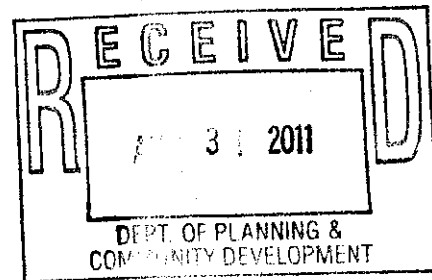


# THE SUQUAMISH TRIBE

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August 29, 2011

Bainbridge Island City Council  
City of Bainbridge Island  
280 Madison Avenue North  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110-1812



Re: Bainbridge Island Shoreline Management Plan

Dear Council Members:

The City of Bainbridge Island is in the process of updating its Shoreline Management Plan, and the decisions you make on updating this document will have a direct effect on the resources the Suquamish Tribe reserved in the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott and our culture.

The Suquamish Tribe ceded aboriginal lands, including Bainbridge Island, to the U.S. government in the Treaty, but reserved the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed (U & A) grounds and stations. Bainbridge Island is situated within the Tribe's U & A.

Activities within shoreline areas have affected Treaty-reserved fishery resources that are critical to the Tribe's culture and our community's welfare and economic well-being. Four species of salmon in western Washington are listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act, some for more than a decade.


Salmon harvests have been reduced to the point that further cuts can no longer contribute significantly to the recovery of wild salmon stocks. These harvesting reductions have been very difficult to the Suquamish Tribe. Some tribes have even lost their most basic ceremonial and subsistence fisheries – the cornerstone of tribal life. Stopping habitat degradation is the cornerstone of salmon recovery, and protecting existing habitat is the most important action needed in the short term according to the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan.

It is imperative that we protect shoreline processes, structures, and functions, which are critical for juvenile salmon, other finfish, and aquatic invertebrates. Your decisions on updating this document will directly affect how this habitat will be protected and the resources our future generations will enjoy.

As federal court Judge William Orrick observed, "The most fundamental prerequisite to the right to take fish is the existence of fish to be taken."

I appreciate the opportunity to share the Tribe's perspective on the Shoreline Management Plan update, and we look forward to reviewing the document. Our staff technical lead is Alison O'Sullivan (360-394-8447).

Sincerely,



Leonard Forsman  
Chairman

Cc: Brenda Bauer, COBI  
Libby Hudson, COBI  
Ryan Ericson, COBI